

Warner Bros. to make 'Spy Hunter' film

Feature project based on 1980s videogame

By DAVE MCNARY

Warner Bros. is game for "Spy Hunter."

The studio is developing a feature version of the videogame with Dan Lin ("Sherlock Holmes") and Roy Lee of Vertigo producing. The story follows a highly trained spy hunter whose job it is to eliminate rogue spies when they become liabilities to their governments.

Chad St. John has been tapped to pen the screenplay. His scripting credits for Warner Bros. include "Days Before," "Sgt. Rock" and "Motor City." Doug Davison is exec producing and Stephen Gilchrist is co-producer. Jon Berg is overseeing for Warners. The original "Spy Hunter" videogame was published in 1983 by Midway Games, acquired last year by Warner Bros. in bankruptcy court.

"Spy Hunter" had recently been in development at Universal, where John Woo and Paul W.S. Anderson were attached to direct at various points and Dwayne Johnson attached to star. Scribes including Michael Brandt, Derek Haas, Zak Penn and Stuart Beattie had all worked on "Spy Hunter" scripts.



Warner Bros. picked up most of Midway's assets in bankruptcy court last summer for the fire-sale price of \$33 million, giving the studio rights to "Mortal Kombat," "Spy Hunter," "Joust" and several other game franchises -- with the intention of continuing them as games and extending the brands to the bigscreen.

Warner Bros. has been bolstering its videogame and interactive biz. It bought Snowblind Studios last year, "Lego" games producer TT Games in 2007, and Monolith Prods. in 2006. The studio also owns a 30% stake in Eidos (behind the "Tomb Raider" games franchise). It took over control of "The Lord of the Rings" franchise from Electronic Arts earlier this year.